

CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIFTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 24 August 1966, at 10.30 a.m.

THE UNIVERSITY
OF MICHIGAN

DEC 2 1966

DOCUMENT
COLLECTION

Chairman:

Mrs. A. MYRDAL

(Sweden)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. D. SILVEIRA da MOTA
Mr. A. da COSTA GUIMARAES
Mr. S. de QUEIROZ DUARTE
Mr. C.H. PAULINO PRATES

Bulgaria:

Mr. C. LUKANOV
Mr. B. KONSTANTINOV
Mr. D. POPOV

Burma:

U MAUNG MAUNG GYI

Canada:

Mr. E.L.M. BURNS
Mr. C.J. MARSHALL
Mr. P.D. LEE

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. T. LAHODA
Mr. V. VAJNAR

Ethiopia:

Mr. A. ABERRA
Mr. B. ASSFAW

India:

Mr. V.C. TRIVEDI
Mr. K.P. LUKOSE
Mr. K.P. JAIN

Italy:

Mr. G.P. TOZZOLI
Mr. S. AVETTA

Mexico:

Mr. A. GOMEZ ROBLEDO

Nigeria:

Mr. G.O. IJEWERE
Mr. M.B. BRIMAH

Poland:

Mr. M. BLUSZTAJN
Mr. E. STANIEWSKI

PRESENT AT THE TABLE (contd)

Romania:

Mr. V. DUMITRESCU
Mr. N. ECCOBESCU
Mr. C. UNGUREANU
Mr. A. COROIANU

Sweden:

Mrs. A. MYRDAL
Mr. P. HALMARSKJOLD
Mr. R. BOMAN
Mr. U. ERICSSON

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

Mr. A.A. ROSHCIN
Mr. I.I. CHEPROV
Mr. M.P. SHELEPIN
Mr. V.B. TOULINOV

United Arab Republic:

Mr. H. KHALLAF
Mr. A. OSMAN

United Kingdom:

Lord CHALFONT
Sir Harold BEELEY
Miss E.J.M. RICHARDSON
Mr. M.R. MORLAND

United States of America:

Mr. A.S. FISHER
Mr. C.G. BREAM
Mr. A. NEIDLE
Mr. J. PRESEL

Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

Deputy Special Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

The CHAIRMAN (Sweden): I declare open the two hundred and eighty-fifth plenary meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

Mr. BLUSTAJN (Poland) (translation from French): This session of our Committee is about to end. In the opinion of our delegation it would be useful to dwell for a moment on the results of our efforts during the past period.

I do not think I am alone in noting that the Eighteen-Nation Committee failed to make any progress during its 1966 session. What is the reason for this state of affairs? With all due deference to certain members of the Committee, the Polish delegation is convinced that the problem must be placed in a wider context. We may have different, indeed even opposite opinions regarding certain facts; but it would be futile, in our opinion, to pretend that our Committee can escape the grave consequences of the events which darken the international horizon today.

There is no doubt whatever that our discussions are being carried on in an extremely unfavourable international climate. The negative influence exercised by the United States aggression in Viet-Nam on the work of our Committee cannot be overestimated. The war which the United States is waging in Viet-Nam is an obvious manifestation of an imperialist policy of aggression. The military operations increase in intensity every day. The United States military command in Viet-Nam has imposed total war on that country. In the south of the country the war is becoming ever more ferocious, sparing neither women and children nor old people. In the north of the country the United States Air Force does not hesitate to bomb the civilian population of Hanoi and Haiphong, and to destroy industrial installations and dams. Violations of the demilitarized zone have become regular practice. Tomorrow the war against the Viet-Nameese people may take even more barbarous forms, for that is the inevitable logic of escalation.

The United States Government deludes itself that it can snatch a military victory at any price, in order to impose a régime of its choosing on the Viet-Nameese people. But can it believe that the will of the Viet-Nameese people, whose struggle has the material and political support of the Soviet Union and of the other socialist countries, as well as the sympathy of world public opinion, will yield to the imperatives of the global strategy of United States imperialism?

(Mr. Blusztajn, Poland)

The Secretary of the Polish United Workers Party, Wladyslaw Gomulka, in his speech on 16 July, when assessing the situation in Viet-Nam, said:

"If the political leaders of the United States were to give proof of the desire to make a fundamental examination of the situation, to reject illusions and erroneous calculations and to recognize objective reality, they would certainly have to arrive at the conclusion that the time has come to change their policy, to abandon the idea of continuing to escalate the war in Viet-Nam, and to direct their activities sincerely towards a peaceful solution in conformity with the Geneva Treaty, as proposed by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and by the National Liberation Front of South Viet-Nam."

A fundamental reconsideration of the situation, the rejection of wrong calculations and outdated myths, the need to recognize objective reality and to take it into account -- those are the requisites for United States policy in regard to other international problems and, above all, in regard to European problems. The events in Viet-Nam which endanger peace in Asia, and United States policy in Europe which is adapted to the perspective of the continuation of the cold war by rejecting any proposal aimed at strengthening peace and confidence in that part of the world, cannot be interpreted as compatible with a sincere desire for peace and disarmament.

In fact the United States, by giving its support to the aggressive and revisionist forces in the Federal Republic of Germany, is encouraging them to continue their policy of revenge and to persist in their determination to obtain nuclear weapons. In the statement which Chancellor Erhardt made at the end of last year, he said: "The Federal Government considers it indispensable to adapt the North Atlantic Treaty to the new political and military requirements". He added: "At present, some of its members have nuclear weapons at their disposal and others have not". He ended by saying: "We must not be kept away from sharing in nuclear weapons".

We have no reason to believe that that statement no longer corresponds to the intentions of the West German Government. The Western Powers -- and, above all, the United States -- have unfortunately not done anything so far to oppose these

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ambitions. On the contrary, the text of the draft treaty on non-proliferation proposed by the United States (ENDC/152 and Add.1) strengthens our conviction that the United States is ready to satisfy the nuclear aspirations of the Federal Republic of Germany.

I should like to reaffirm once again that for Poland this question is of fundamental importance. We are definitely in favour of concluding an agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We are ready to subscribe to all the obligations deriving from such an agreement. But we cannot accept any partial solution. We shall never be party to an agreement which would serve as a screen behind which would be undertaken the process of nuclear armament of a State which has fixed as the objective of its policy the revision of frontiers in Europe.

We are firmly convinced that European and world public opinion shares our views. We have no doubt that the peoples of Europe wish to see the evolution of our continent follow the path of peaceful development in conditions of security, mutual confidence and co-operation in all fields. Only within the framework of such a concept can the solution of all European problems be envisaged. The adoption in the field of atomic armaments of unilateral measures which many European countries would be obliged to regard as a threat to their own security, and which would have as an immediate consequence the increase of tension and the acceleration of the arms race, would certainly not contribute to the achievement of that objective.

The strengthening of the mutual confidence and security of all European States presupposes, above all, the recognition of existing frontiers and the absence of any act constituting a fait accompli in the field of armaments, especially nuclear armaments. If the Western Powers are not yet ready to envisage with us the application in Central Europe of measures which would immediately reduce the nuclear confrontation in that region -- which we regret -- they should, it seems to us, adopt a more positive attitude towards the proposals submitted by the Polish Government aimed at freezing the present state of affairs as regards nuclear armaments in Central Europe (ENDC/C.1/1; PV.189, p.6). Their refusal to do so cannot in our opinion be interpreted otherwise than as expressing their desire to retain freedom of action; this, in conjunction with their attitude towards non-

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proliferation, cannot but strengthen our conviction that the United States has not renounced the idea of sharing its nuclear weapons with the Federal Republic of Germany.

If I have devoted so much time to European problems, it is because I believe that the implementation of the United States concept of non-proliferation would have immediate and very dangerous consequences in this part of the world. I do not, however, share the opinion that the implications of that concept concern only European countries. I believe that this is a problem of a general kind, because, if we accepted the United States point of view and the United States definition of non-proliferation, we should open the way to the implementation of various concepts of joint possession and disposition of nuclear weapons in all parts of the world. But that would nullify the efforts of many countries in favour of regional denuclearization and would involve them in the nuclear armaments race. It could also contribute to the breakdown of the non-alignment policy which is an important factor in the maintenance of world balance.

The Polish delegation wishes to take note of the statement by the United States representative, Mr. Fisher, which we heard at our meeting yesterday and according to which his Government is ready to seek a compromise solution to the problems which divide us, in order to achieve an agreement on non-proliferation. Incidentally, that is not the first time our Committee has heard such statements. It must, however, be noted with regret that so far they have not been followed by deeds.

The solution of the problem of general and complete disarmament, the main task of the Committee, continually encounters disagreement on the question of nuclear disarmament, which is -- we are all agreed on this point -- the fundamental problem of the entire disarmament process. The place which the Western Powers persist in giving to atomic weapons in their disarmament plans, and their negative attitude towards the compromise solution proposed by the Soviet Union (ENDC/2/Rev.1/Add.1) -- the only solution capable of reconciling the desire of all peoples to see the threat of a nuclear war disappear as soon as possible, together with the confidence which some people seem to place in nuclear deterrence -- have had the effect of bringing the discussion on general and complete disarmament to a

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halt. As long as the Western Powers fail to modify the position which they have adopted in this respect since 1962, we do not see any possibility of progress. Nor do we believe that the adoption of a clear-cut position in regard to the Soviet concept can be avoided by the procedural artifice proposed by the West and consisting in the setting-up of a working group for the purpose of examining the theoretical premises and the practical consequences of the application of the deterrence theory during the disarmament process.

The Polish delegation must also note with regret that the Committee has not recorded any progress in the discussion of the problem of extending the Moscow Treaty (ENDC/100/Rev.1) to underground tests. Three years have already passed since the conclusion of that Treaty but, although during that time great advances have been made in seismology, the Western Powers continue to insist on on-site inspections. The argument concerning the risk that would ensue from the conclusion of a treaty the implementation of which would be verified by national means has little weight when examined in the light of the continuous series of nuclear tests which is being carried out at United States testing grounds.

We share the opinion of the Swedish delegation (ENDC/PV.281, p.10) that the time is very near when the absence of a ban covering all tests could give a new impulse to the armaments race. If the United States and the United Kingdom sincerely wish to put a brake on the nuclear armaments race and to the process of improving nuclear weapons, they can give a much more eloquent proof of this by modifying their position in regard to the methods of verifying an agreement to end underground tests than by extolling the merits of their proposal to put an end to the production of fissionable materials for military purposes.

The Polish delegation would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the efforts made by the delegations of the non-aligned countries in our Committee in their search for new solutions to the problem of verification of the prohibition of underground nuclear tests. The memorandum (ENDC/177) submitted last Thursday shows that compulsory on-site inspection should not be considered to be an indispensable element of an agreement, and that there may be other means of reaching a satisfactory solution. We believe that it is on these latter means that the negotiations should now be concentrated.

(Mr. Blusztajn, Poland)

In this final statement I have limited myself to dealing with only a few of the problems which have been the subject of our discussions. That, of course, does not mean that the Polish delegation does not duly appreciate the other proposals submitted during the present session of the Committee, such as the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, the elimination of foreign military bases on the territory of other countries, the establishment of denuclearized zones, and so on. Nevertheless, we have considered it useful to concentrate, above all, on those questions which the General Assembly of the United Nations recognized at its twentieth session as of primary importance, and which will certainly be the principal subject of discussion at its twenty-first session.

We regret that the Committee has nothing positive to submit. In fact, we are going to the session of the General Assembly empty-handed. However, it seems to me that this should not be regarded as a confession of impotence, any more than as proof of the failure of the very concept of disarmament negotiations. Indeed not. The idea of negotiations aimed at bringing about a world without war, a world without arms, is certainly not bankrupt. It has taken root deep in the consciences of hundreds of millions of human beings.

It seems to me that our discussions have made it possible to reveal the real obstacles which prevent us from reaching agreement. It is becoming increasingly clear that these obstacles are not technical but political. They derive above all from the lack of political will on the part of the Western Powers, especially the United States, from the refusal to abandon a policy based on positions of strength, from the inability to reject old concepts which no longer have any foundation in reality, in favour of a policy based on a realistic evaluation of the present international situation. Now it is for the General Assembly of the United Nations to speak. The Polish delegation will spare no effort in order that the debate which will take place in New York may lead to constructive recommendations capable of giving a new impetus to the work of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

Mr. BURNS (Canada): I intended to make a statement this morning -- and I shall make it later -- which would outline the possibilities for progress which have become evident in the discussions we have had recently in this Committee. I must say that I have not been at all encouraged to make a speech of that kind by listening to the statement we have just heard from the representative of Poland. It seems to me that his statement would be very encouraging to certain groups of people. Who would those groups of people be? They would be the groups of people in the Western countries who are entirely opposed to disarmament and who keep on saying that no results will come from this Committee, because the Warsaw Pact countries do not intend to take the smallest step away from the positions they have established, which are quite incapable of leading us forward to any agreement.

In regard to his opening remarks on subjects which we had hoped were perhaps put aside for the time, we shall leave it to others to reply in extenso. We would merely call the attention of the non-aligned members of this Committee to the fact that, while Poland, India and Canada are members of the International Control Commission in Viet-Nam, it has been found, particularly recently, that the Polish delegation is quite unable to agree with the other two delegations when there is any question about whether aggression comes from the North and has provoked some of the reactions which the Polish delegation finds so reprehensible on the part of the United States and other allies of the South Viet-Nameese Government.

I should like now to go on to what I had intended to say in the beginning.

We have reached the point in the Committee's proceedings at which statements consist of a summing up or stocktaking, and today I should like to give the views of the Canadian delegation. We find it unhelpful that representatives of East European delegations have declared in their recent statements that the Committee has failed to produce any useful results from its deliberations this year and have then attempted to put the blame on the Western delegations. Such statements do not help us to move towards the agreements we are expected to achieve. Furthermore, they are bound to produce a rejoinder in kind, as this morning's has. To reverse the biblical quotation, the East European delegations are very quick to perceive beams in the eyes of the Western delegations, but do not admit to any motes in their own eyes.

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

The Canadian delegation does not suggest that the results of our labours over the past eight months are anything to inspire pride. We are once again forced to report to the United Nations that we have failed to achieve agreement on any of the topics we have been discussing --- including the two which we were asked to treat as matters of particular urgency. Perhaps we have in the process further reduced the world's opinion of the Committee's value. Yet, in spite of this dark picture, my delegation considers it would be wrong not to note some positive elements in the situation, positive elements which do in fact exist.

To begin with, I think there is growing appreciation both here and elsewhere that the complicated and sensitive problems of disarmament are to be solved not by magic incantations or slogans but only by hard and sustained effort. To appreciate that fact is the beginning of wisdom.

Secondly, the level of debate in recent months and the atmosphere in the Committee have on the whole been more constructive than ever before. If we have failed to achieve specific agreements, we have at least begun to develop a more promising approach to the problems before us. Most delegations are happy to see polemics replaced by reasoned arguments, high-flown generalities by concentration on specific and practical issues, and mistrust by increasing frankness. In these circumstances our discussions over the months have served to clarify the issues at stake, identify areas of agreement and pinpoint remaining differences. That may seem to be a meagre accomplishment in the face of the monumental task which confronts us, but it is a development which could lead to substantive results if there is a genuine desire to move ahead.

I am sorry to say that there was little sign of such a break in the clouds in the recent summing-up statements of the various East European delegations. They were largely negative in tone; and that, unfortunately, is typical of the approach those delegations have adopted so often throughout the course of the year's discussions. At the end of our sessions the essence of the Warsaw Pact countries' attitude seems to be that, because their views on the various topics under consideration have not been accepted, the Committee's efforts have been worthless and that the blame for that must be borne by the West. It is a sterile exercise to try to attribute blame, but to those who insist on doing so I would simply say that the record of activities here over the months speaks for itself. It is quite clear which delegations have continually attempted to elaborate new ideas, while others have merely repeated

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well-worn themes; it is clear which delegations have demonstrated a willingness to study carefully any serious proposals put forward, and which have refused to entertain any ideas other than their own.

Turning now to the specific, I should like to touch briefly on a number of topics we have been considering here and to seek in the process to identify constructive elements which furnish prospects for future progress. In the first place, I must disagree with the Soviet representative's contention at our meeting on 16 August, when he said:

"... no progress has been made in the Committee on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In spite of the fact that this question has been considered in this Committee for more than six months, the situation is in the same position as it was in January of this year..."

(ENDC/PV.282, pp. 16 and 17).

For its part, the Canadian delegation simply cannot accept that as an accurate description of where we are now. We think that as a result of our debate the issues involved are much clearer now than they were at the beginning of the year, the interests of various nations and groups of nations have been identified, a large element of common ground has been blocked out, and the remaining problems to be solved have been highlighted.

We have not, it is true, concluded an agreement, but I should like to reiterate our belief that further progress could have been made if the Soviet Union had been willing to try to draft language for a non-proliferation treaty on the points on which there is agreement. The reason given by our colleagues from the Soviet Union for not doing so is that, as there is not yet agreement on the prevention of the acquisition of nuclear weapons by a non-nuclear State from a nuclear Power, which they regard as the most important part of the treaty, it is useless for us to try to complete in writing the agreement which exists on other parts which would be necessary components of any non-proliferation treaty. Naturally we do not agree with that view, but we see that in the circumstances there is not much use in pursuing our proposal -- which was, of course, the proposal of other delegations.

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

As I have said before, the Canadian delegation hopes that before long there will be a solution of the problem of responsibilities for nuclear weapons within an alliance, a solution which will permit of final agreement on non-proliferation. For that final agreement it would seem that there must also be a clarification by the Soviet delegation of what it means by the terms which it uses: "possession", "ownership" and "transfer". Here we quote, in support, from the joint memorandum on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons submitted by the eight non-aligned nations:

"They wish to draw attention to the usefulness of clearly defined terms in order to prevent any misunderstanding or contradictory interpretation now or in the future." (ENDC/178, p. 2)

The terms which I have mentioned have been much used by the Soviet delegation but have not been strictly defined. Perhaps they could not be strictly defined in a series of statements made in this Committee. However, if we are to have agreement, they must obviously be defined clearly in some form of negotiation.

The Canadian delegation has studied with much care the eight-nation memorandum on non-proliferation which you presented yesterday, Madam Chairman. We find ourselves generally in accord with the views expressed in it. We feel that that statement should be useful to representatives of nations other than those represented here, when we come to debate disarmament in the First Committee at the twenty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly. We should like to thank the eight non-aligned delegations for having produced their statements on non-proliferation and on the comprehensive test ban in time for other delegations to study and comment on them before we finish our meetings at this session.

While we are on the subject of non-proliferation, I should like to refer to the matter which was raised by the representative of the United States at the meeting of 9 August, that is, the question of using nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. In particular we noted Mr. Fisher's statement --

"... that the development of nuclear explosives for peaceful applications by a State not already possessing nuclear weapons could hardly be accepted by the world as involving peaceful purposes only." (ENDC/PV.280, p. 14)

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

Although Canada has an extensive background in nuclear technology and is in a position to develop independently a device for peaceful nuclear explosions, it has recognized both the difficulty and the undesirability of doing so. In our view the development by a non-nuclear-weapon State of the capacity to conduct a nuclear explosion even though it is designed for peaceful purposes would in effect constitute proliferation, and proliferation is a development to which the Canadian Government has repeatedly declared its opposition. In addition, Canadian authorities are fully aware of the cost in terms of resources and manpower which would be involved in developing a nuclear device to carry out an explosion for peaceful purposes. Our policy, therefore, has been and will continue to be to use nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes but to exclude from this activity the testing of devices for nuclear explosions.

Although Canada disclaims any intention to develop its own capacity to conduct a peaceful nuclear explosion, it appreciates that research is being carried out by existing nuclear Powers and could eventually lead to the perfection of a device which could be used economically for a peaceful project. As a country with large natural resources requiring development, it would not wish to be deprived of the possible benefits of the use of peaceful nuclear explosions, and therefore we were happy to hear that the United States accepts the fact that those benefits should be available to all States irrespective of whether they possess nuclear weapons.

We have noted the method proposed by the United States delegation whereby nuclear explosive services for peaceful application could be made available by nuclear-weapon Powers under appropriate international observation (ENDC/PV.280, p. 15). The Canadian delegation attaches considerable importance to the matter of international observation, since it will be essential for any peaceful explosion which is carried out to be conducted under conditions which command unqualified international confidence. To achieve that objective, we would suggest that consideration be given to a system of prior notification to all countries that an explosion is being planned, as well as the appropriate observation by an international agency of the explosion itself. We recognize that control and custody of the nuclear device should remain with the State providing it, in order to alleviate any suspicion of proliferation under the guise of a peaceful explosion.

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

My delegation would hope that that proposal of the United States might provide a starting-point for development of a generally-acceptable arrangement to make the potential benefits of peaceful nuclear explosions available to all States while closing the door to possible proliferation. We have noted the positive comment on that idea made already by you, Madam Chairman, as representative of Sweden, at the meeting of 11 August (ENDC/PV.281, p. 7), and we should be interested to hear the views of other delegations.

Finally, on the topic of non-proliferation, the Canadian delegation would like to reaffirm its support for the idea of nuclear-free zones in areas where nations within such zones agree that to bar nuclear weapons from them would serve to improve their security. In particular we should like to congratulate the Latin-American nations, which have made considerable progress in devising an agreement for a nuclear-free zone. We are sorry to hear that it has been necessary to postpone the meeting which should have taken place about the end of this month. We hope that the meeting will not be postponed for long, and that when it does take place they will be able to arrive at a definitive treaty.

The point is often made by representatives of the Warsaw Pact nations here that, if a nuclear-free zone would be good for Latin America and perhaps for Africa, it should also be good for Europe. The Canadian delegation and other representatives of the NATO countries here have frequently replied to that. Our replies were generally to the effect that we were not opposed in principle to the idea of nuclear-free zones in Europe, but that very special security problems existed there, and the proposals put forward by the Warsaw Pact countries were not equitable. While providing considerable advantages to the Warsaw Pact countries, they would be disadvantageous to the security of the Western European NATO countries.

I do not wish to enlarge on that at present, but I should like to say that, while no proposals which have been put forward to date would seem to offer an immediate possibility of fruitful negotiations, that is not to say that the idea of a gradual reduction of tactical nuclear weapons in the European zone should not be studied. The Canadian delegation has in mind the position expressed, both at the conference of NATO Foreign Ministers last June and in various statements emanating from conferences or individual representatives of Warsaw Pact countries, that it is desirable that better relationships be established between East and West. If such relations can be improved and if certain political problems do not create an obstacle, then some day or other, armaments -- and especially nuclear armaments -- in this zone will, we hope, be reduced.

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

As for the question of a comprehensive test ban, we have nothing specific to add to what we said in our statement at the meeting of 9 August (ENDC/PV.280). We proposed then that a start be made on drafting a treaty to prevent underground testing, utilizing some of the suggestions which have been made by non-aligned nations on how to break the deadlock on this question --- that is, of course, the deadlock over the means of verifying that the treaty is being observed by all parties. We hope that in the period between the closing of our session and the opening of the discussions on disarmament at the twenty-first session of the General Assembly the Powers principally concerned will have thought over their positions and be prepared to put forward specific proposals which are likely to lead to agreement. In that regard, they will have to consider the suggestions put forward by the non-aligned delegations in document ENDC/177. The Canadian delegation believes that these suggestions should be studied once again by the nuclear Powers, with goodwill and with the aim of finding a way out of the deadlock in negotiations on the subject of an underground test-ban treaty.

We now come to the question of general and complete disarmament. The Conference has not devoted much time during our sessions this year to general and complete disarmament. That was in large measure due to the resolutions that we have had from the twentieth session of the General Assembly, which requested the Conference to give prior attention to the questions of non-proliferation and of a comprehensive test ban. Nevertheless, the statements which have been made have reaffirmed that general and complete disarmament remains the final goal of our negotiations. They have recognized the fact that unfortunately a deadlock has developed in preceding years and what that deadlock is. The Canadian delegation has said before that the problem of general and complete disarmament is not so much that of elaborating a complete treaty but rather how to make a start on disarmament. If we can make a start with meaningful, concrete measures, then we shall find a way to progress towards general disarmament, to which we are all committed by adherence to United Nations General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV).

Among the collateral measures which might help us towards our goal there is, first of all, the cessation of the production of nuclear weapon-grade material from existing reactors and facilities by the nuclear Powers. Recently the representative of the United States has elaborated that proposal in considerable detail. He has argued that its verification would not impose onerous or intrusive inspections, and he has offered to demonstrate later this year to anyone interested just how that problem might be handled in practice. He also told us that to convert a certain portion of fissionable

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material, including fissionable material in existing nuclear weapons, would be a real step towards disarmament, and he mentioned that the fissile material released by that measure could provide enormous quantities of electrical energy which is badly needed by many countries in the course of development. That measure has continued to receive wide support from non-aligned delegations, as is evident from the statements made by the Mexican representative at the 246th meeting, the Burmese representative at the 250th meeting, and the Brazilian representative at the 251st meeting.

In addition to the basic United States idea for a cut-off, we now have the very interesting three-step proposal which you, Madam Chairman, as representative of Sweden, outlined at our meeting of 11 August (ENDC/PV.281, p.5). The suggestions which you made will be studied with great care by the appropriate Canadian authorities and, I hope, by officials of many other countries as well.

Besides the cut-off, another very valuable preliminary measure could be a freeze of the production and development of the most important, the most deadly and the most dangerous weapons of mass destruction and their vehicles. In this connexion the representative of the United States made it very clear in his statement on 16 August (ENDC/PV.282, pp.13-15) why such a freeze must apply to defensive weapons -- that is, anti-ballistic missiles -- as well as offensive weapons, if it is to have any real meaning.

We have also had a proposal before us for some time (ENDC/120), although it has not been recently discussed, for the mutual reduction of the vehicles for nuclear weapons: that is to say, heavy bombers and missiles designed for that purpose. If the Soviet Union really wishes to ease tension and stop the arms race, it is that measure which, above all, it should be prepared to negotiate upon. It has been indicated (ENDC/PV.179, pp.12 et seq.) that the United States position on that proposal is a flexible one. If the Soviet Union would negotiate and an agreement could be reached, it would be an assurance to the rest of the world that the great Powers really mean what they say when they speak of disarmament. If you could reduce the number of vehicles, even if they were not the most modern of their kind, that would be disarmament and not merely words about disarmament.

We note with particular interest that all three of those measures are mentioned in the eight-nation memorandum on non-proliferation as desirable "tangible steps to halt the nuclear arms race and to limit, reduce and eliminate the stocks of nuclear weapons and the means of their delivery" (ENDC/178, p.3).

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

Finally, in connexion with the subject of general and complete disarmament, we should like again to support the idea advanced by the representative of the United Arab Republic (ENDC/PV.271, p.12) that a working group should be set up to study the question of what is necessary in the way of nuclear deterrence during the process of disarmament. That idea, which could be useful in breaking the current deadlock on general and complete disarmament, was given fresh impetus when Mr. Fisher indicated that the United States would participate in such a working group without pre-conditions. If the representative of the Soviet Union could be as forthcoming, we could hope to direct our future deliberations on general and complete disarmament along a positive and constructive channel. Possibly that idea could be combined with the proposal of the representative of Sweden (ENDC/PV.202, p.10) that, as we have not been able to progress by considering the beginning of disarmament, we should look at the last stage with a view to seeing, among other things, what degree of deterrence would be necessary at that stage.

The Canadian delegation listened with much interest to the thoughtful statement made at our last meeting by the representative of Ethiopia, Mr. Aberra. We have examined in a preliminary way the memorandum which he placed before the Committee (ENDC/180), containing a number of reflections and proposals in connexion with the establishment, where appropriate and feasible, of nuclear-free zones. That memorandum recalls the proposal that there should be an agreement by nuclear Powers not to use nuclear weapons against nuclear-free zones (ENDC/167); and, as we understand it, the memorandum also incorporates a provision that individual non-nuclear-weapon States could "denuclearize" their territories by a declaration and enjoy the same immunity as nuclear-free zones comprising several States. That would be a way, it seems, of arriving at undertakings, such as those suggested earlier by the representative of Nigeria, that nuclear weapons should not be used against non-nuclear States (ENDC/PV.235, p.31). The Ethiopian memorandum thus combines two ideas concerning assurances of freedom from nuclear attack for nations not having nuclear weapons on their territories. The memorandum also proposes certain verification provisions. The Canadian delegation believes that those suggestions are valuable, and they will be examined with care by the appropriate Canadian authorities.

In conclusion, I should like to say that, while the results we have achieved during the last year are far from impressive, my delegation does not consider that our efforts have been entirely wasted. We have here the machinery for meaningful

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

negotiations, as well as a number of potentially useful proposals for surmounting the problems which confront us. What we still lack is the political will to make the compromises which are essential if there is to be progress in disarmament. That political will must be demonstrated not only by one side but by all parties concerned, and particularly by the two super-Powers represented here. We can only hope that during the disarmament debate at the twenty-first session of the General Assembly and here next year that essential element can be found.

Mr. FISHER (United States of America): The purpose of my intervention is merely to express my regret that the representative of Poland has taken up the time of this Committee by beginning his remarks with a repetition of the propaganda attacks against the United States action in Viet-Nam. We have explained many times in this Committee the basis for our action in Viet-Nam: we seek peace there. However, this Committee is not the proper forum to discuss it.

I should like also to note that the representative of Poland repeated some fairly familiar -- one might even be tempted to use the word "stale" -- charges against the Federal Republic of Germany. We have heard them before; we have answered them before; and I do not intend to take up any more of the time of the Committee by answering them now.

The CHAIRMAN (Sweden): I should like to remind the members of the Committee that we shall have an informal meeting after the conclusion of this meeting.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 285th meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador Mrs. Alva Myrdal, representative of Sweden.

"Statements were made by the representatives of Poland, Canada and the United States.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 25 August 1966 at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.

